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MDAQMD RECOGNIZED BY NATIONAL MAGAZINE, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Victorville – Though rain is a rarity in the High Desert, the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) has been recently “showered” with recognition by several prominent sources, including a New-York based magazine and the California Governor’s Office.

In December of 2003, the MDAQMD – whose jurisdiction encompasses 20,000 square miles of San Bernardino County’s High Desert and Riverside County’s Palo Verde Valley – was named “Air District of the Year” by *Power Magazine*, the official journal of the electric generating industry. The award was presented to the regulatory agency for its critical involvement in bringing the High Desert Power Project (HDPP) to fruition, and hence, helping California to meet its future energy needs while minimizing air quality impacts. *Power Magazine* also named the natural gas powered, combined-cycle Victorville plant its 2003 “Power Plant of the Year” during a ceremony held in conjunction with the Global Energy Awards in New York City on December 12.

According to Robert Peltzer, *Power Magazine*’s Editor-in-Chief, one of the most important criteria for the HDPP’s selection as Plant of the Year was the facility’s “unique system for handling emissions, as well as the interbasin emission credit trading legislation” sponsored by the MDAQMD. The emission credit trading procedure - which facilitates the development of new power sources in transport-impacted areas, while insuring continued air quality improvements - is expected to help pave the way for similar projects statewide.

Just two months prior to the nod from *Power Magazine*, the 2003 Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards Program recognized the MDAQMD for its role as the lead agency for the Mojave Environmental Education Consortium. The Consortium is a network of local businesses and organizations that links teachers with high quality environmental education resources, at no charge.

During the same period, MDAQMD Air Pollution Control Officer Chuck Fryxell was also

appointed Honorary Chairman of the Washington D.C.-based Business Advisory Council by Majority House Leader Tom Delay (R-Texas).

Most recently, the MDAQMD was awarded a “Best of the Desert” designation by the Victor Valley *Daily Press*, after voters in the newspaper’s annual poll named “clean air” as the best reason for living in the High Desert.

“We are humbled and honored by the recognition which has come our way;” stated Fryxell, adding that it is the air district’s hope the accolades “will help promote the High Desert as a business-friendly region committed to balancing sustainable economic growth with protection of the environment.”